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*J. John Crawford &  
Believe.*

ON THE SO-CALLED

# CELTIC LANGUAGES

IN REFERENCE TO

## THE QUESTION OF RACE

[PRIVATELY PRINTED]

LONDON

SPOTTISWOODE & CO., NEW-STREET SQUARE, E.C.

1863





ON THE

## SO-CALLED CELTIC LANGUAGES.



THERE exist two living European languages which, going under the common name of Celtic, are usually believed to be one tongue, or at least, sister languages of one origin and spoken by the same race of man. These are, on one hand, the native language of Ireland and of the mountainous part of Scotland which are beyond doubt essentially the same, and the native language of Wales and Brittany—which are equally sister tongues. I have long been of opinion that the two languages in question are really different and distinct tongues, and having made such enquiry as was in my power with the view of determining the question, I propose to state the result in the present paper. The qualifications which I bring to this task are soon told. One of the two languages, the Gaelic, was the language of my childhood (I still retain some colloquial acquaintance with it), and of the languages of some oriental nations, probably in as advanced a state when their tongues took their present shape as were the Welsh and Irish when theirs did so.

In order to determine the consanguinity of languages, the first thing necessary is to find a test by which consanguinity can be certainly determined, and I think this not a matter of much difficulty. The test which I would apply

would be the following. When between two or more languages, there is a substantial agreement in phonetic character, in grammatical structure, and in the great body of their words, such languages may confidently be pronounced to be cognate tongues, or languages having a common parentage.

The words which seem to me most distinctly to prove languages to be cognate are prepositions, auxiliary verbs and conjunctions, adverbs of time and place, those parts of speech, in fact, which form the links of language, and without which sentences cannot be constructed. When these are essentially the same in any two languages, these languages may be pronounced at once as sister tongues, while, when they differ, they may with equal confidence be pronounced as different tongues, or of different origin, although they may contain many words in common. All the words referred to are in English of German origin, and none of them of Norman French. The same class of words in the French, the Italian, and the Spanish are of Latin origin. Such a French particle as 'sans,' was at one time introduced into our language, but it was expelled as an intruder.

When a language can be spoken or written in words of one tongue out of several which enter into its composition, that language will be found to be its parent, and the rest of its words but subsidiary. Our own language, although at least one-sixth part of our dictionary be French, can readily be written without a single French word, while it is impossible to write a sentence of it with French words only. It is the same with all other tongues, into the composition of which two or more foreign elements enter. The languages of Southern Europe all contain a considerable admixture of Teutonic words, but they are written easily in words derived from Latin without their assistance, while it is impossible to construct a single sentence of them with words purely Teutonic.

The same rule extends to the oriental languages. The Persian language may be written without a word of the large infusion of Arabic which now forms an integral part of it. The *Shah Nameh*, or book of Kings, the greatest work in the language, although written three centuries after the Arabian conquest of Persia, and long after the Persians had adopted the religion and literature of the Arabs, is said not to contain a word of Arabic. All the cultivated languages of Hindustan contain more or less of Persian, with its adopted Arabic, and the Hindi or current language of Upper India a great deal. Yet this last can be written, and as an experiment has actually been written, with the exclusion of Persian and Arabic.

The languages of Southern India which in sound, in form, and in the majority of their words, have no affinity with the languages of Northern India, contain a considerable amount of Sanscrit, but can, notwithstanding, be written omitting every word of that language. The most cultivated languages of the Malay Archipelago contain a good deal of Arabic, and more of Sanscrit, but they can be written easily without their Arabic, and without much difficulty without their Sanscrit element. The principal languages of the Philippine Islands differ essentially in sound, structure, and words from the neighbouring Malay languages, yet contain a very considerable infusion of Malayan words: they can, however, be spoken or written without the help of the latter. In all the cases thus enumerated, there is no difficulty in deciding which portion of a language is primitive and fundamental, and which adventitious; and in several of the examples adduced history aids us in deciding.

Our own literature affords abundant examples of the facility with which sentences may be constructed without the help of the French element of our language. That element, however, is so considerable in amount, and so indis-

pensable to the perfection of our speech, that it is difficult to find passages of any length without words of it. I give the two following well-known passages from Shakespeare as examples—

*Pandulph.* Lady, you mutter madness, and not sorrow.

*Constance.* 'Thou art not holy to belie me so ;

I am not mad : the hair I tear is mine ;

My name is Constance ; I was Geoffrey's wife.

Young Arthur is my son, and he is lost :

I am not mad ; I would to heaven I were !

For then, 't is like I would forget myself :

O, if I could, what grief should I forget !

*King John*, Act III. scene 3.

In this passage, there are but two words which can be suspected to have come from Norman French—*name* and *grief*, and they probably belong equally to the Anglo-Saxon. The second passage contains no word which can even be suspected to be of French origin.

*Griffith.* His overthrow heaped happiness upon him ;

For then, and not till then, he felt himself,

And found the blessedness of being little.

*King Henry the Eighth*, Act IV. scene 2.

The proportion of Norman French in our vocabulary is usually reckoned at one-sixth part, or five-sixths of our language is of German origin, although in use, from the nature of the words of the latter, the proportion is much greater. I believe the proportion of French words in our language has not materially altered in the lapse of near five centuries, or since Chaucer wrote. It should be remarked, that it is by no means indispensable to the efficacy of the test referred to that a sentence should be grammatical. It is enough that all the words necessary to its construction should be of one language.

Tried by the test which I have now endeavoured to

describe, the Gaelic and Welsh languages will be found to be, not sister tongues derived from the same parent, as are Italian and French, but two distinct languages. Their particles and auxiliaries are all wholly different. The phonetic character of the two languages differs very materially, and with the exception of a comparatively small number, their words are wholly different. I shall endeavour to compare the two languages under these three heads.

The Gaelic and Welsh languages are both written in the Roman alphabet, and in some modification or another of it must always have been so. The Irish, it is true, have sometimes laid claim to the invention of indigenous letters, but it is certain that before the introduction of Christianity and its literature, they were as unlettered as the Cannibals of New Zealand. With the exception, indeed, of the people of Greece and Italy, and perhaps the Scandinavians with their Runes, no nation of Europe had invented an alphabet of its own, in striking contrast with the people of Asia, many of whom, as rude in other respects as the ancient Britons and Irish, were yet possessed of the art of writing their own special and independent inventions.

An alphabet, which like the Roman, was invented to represent the sounds of a single language, the Latin, could not be expected to represent faithfully the multifarious languages of Europe, most of which are phonetically so fundamentally different from it, and to no European tongues does this more cogently apply than to the Gaelic and Welsh. The many sounds of the Gaelic, as it is written, are represented by no more than eighteen characters, five of which are vowels, and thirteen consonants, including in the latter the aspirate. But while the characters are few, the sounds are many,—the vowels amounting to eighteen, and the consonants to twenty-four. The Welsh alphabet consists of twenty letters, of which seven are vowels and thirteen consonants, but the

actual sounds reach to thirteen vowels, and the consonants to twenty-four.

Even in the matter of sound, in which particular the two languages certainly make the nearest approach, there is much disparity. In the Welsh language there are three consonant sounds unknown to the Gaelic. These are the two English sounds of *th*, the unaspirated in the words 'this' and 'that,' and the aspirated in the words 'think' and 'thanks,' with the double *ll*. The last is thus described by a Welsh grammarian. 'This letter,' says he, 'represents a sound said to be peculiar to the Welsh language; in pronouncing it, the tongue assumes the same position as in forming *l*, and the breath is finally propelled on each side of the tongue, but more on one side than the other.' The learned author's precept is not likely to be practised to any effectual purpose by a stranger, and, indeed, it is broadly asserted by Welshmen that the genuine sound is never attained except by those who have acquired it in childhood.

The Gaelic has also sounds unknown to the Welsh. These are a double *ll*, which, as far as I can make out, does not materially form the same sound expressed by the same characters in Spanish, as in the word *llana*, a plain and a peculiar guttural which, if not the same, closely resembles in sound that of the nineteenth letter of the Arabic alphabet. Both these united by a peculiar vowel are found in the Gaelic monosyllable which is the name for a calf. This is written, or ought to be written *llegh*, and its true pronunciation is a puzzle to all who do not acquire it in infancy. The word is not improbably taken from the voice of the calf, and that its last letter resembles in sound that of the Arabic one with which I have compared it may be inferred from the directions for its pronunciation given by the celebrated orientalist Merinski, who to accomplish it instructs the learner to imitate the voice of a calf calling to its dam.

There is one characteristic which is supposed to belong

specially to all the languages called Celtic, and to distinguish them from all other tongues. This consists in changing certain of the consonants for others, or even altogether eliding them according to the position of such consonants in a word. For this purpose Irish and Welsh grammarians have divided the consonants into what they call radicals and aspirates, the first being such as are not amenable to the conversion in question, and the last those which are subject to it. The process is known under the name of aspiration ; but as the converted letters are not necessarily, and indeed hardly in any case at all aspirated, a more inaccurate term could not well have been employed, and one wonders indeed how it ever came to be employed. In writing the two languages, the practice has been to annex the aspirate or letter *h* to the converted or elided letters; but in this case it is simply as an orthographic mark, and it seems to be this mere accident which has given rise to the improper term ‘aspiration.’ The Irish in their printed works have lately substituted a dot over the converted letter, but the Scots and Welsh still persevere in using the *h*, so that with them a written word may sometimes consist of many more letters than it has elemental sounds.

Besides the employment of the aspirate for the purpose now stated, it is also used in combination with other consonants to represent sounds for which the Roman alphabet has no representative character. This employment of the aspirate, as a mere orthographic mark, is by no means confined to the Gaelic and Welsh languages, for it extends to our own and other European languages. The combinations, *ch*, *gh*, *sh*, and for which, in the oriental alphabets, there exist distinct characters, are examples.

The practice of commuting or eliding consonants is more frequent in writing the Gaelic and Welsh languages than in other written tongues, but is very far from being a distinctive character of them. In our own language, and in the

French, there are abundant examples where, as Sir Cornwall Lewis observes, "the letters of a word, instead of representing the true sounds of the voice, the word itself becomes an arbitrary symbol of the sound." The Scottish Gaelic was not, however, always so written, for we find, by the book of the Dean of Lismore, dating A.D. 1511, that it was written in a phonetic alphabet. In later times, however, the example of the Irish, who certainly carried the cultivation of the language to the greatest extent, has been followed in Scotland.

The only theory which it appears to me will account for the discrepancy between the written and spoken Gaelic and Welsh is the supposition that, when they were first committed to writing, they were pronounced as we now find them written. Before the Irish and Welsh were taught by strangers to write, they were unquestionably in a very rude and barbarous state, and we can readily believe that their languages must have partaken of their own ruggedness and barbarism. In such a rude state their languages were first committed to writing, and the practice, which has its convenience for etymology, was continued after the languages had attained a certain measure of refinement, and ceased to be pronounced as it was when first written. In writing, the Irish and Welsh have, in fact, pursued a course the very reverse of that followed by the other nations of Europe, who, in proportion as their languages have been refined, have departed more and more from the original pronunciation and orthography. If nations of the south of Europe had, in writing their languages, followed the practice of the Irish and Welsh, they would, as nearly as possible, have preserved the Latin orthography, their grammarians dividing their consonants into immutables and mutables, or, as the Irish call them, radicals and aspirates, and in their grammars we should have directions for commutation and elision.



The changes which foreign words adopted by the Gaelic and Welsh are made to undergo sufficiently corroborate the view thus taken of the question of mutation. A few examples may be given, and I take them from the Irish Grammar of Donovan. The Latin verb to write, *scribo*, is written and no doubt must have been once pronounced *scrib*, which is the original word with the elision of the final vowel. In modern Gaelic, the letter *b* has in the Irish a dot over it, and in the Scots is followed by the aspirate, both being signs that the letter is a commuted one, and converted into a *v*—a sound for which the imperfect Gaelic alphabet has no special representative. The Latin word *sagitta*, an arrow, was written and, it may be presumed, pronounced in old Irish, *sagit*; but, in modern Gaelic, the orthography is *saigead* by the Irish, and *saigh* by the Scots, while the pronunciation, through the elision of the *g* and the conversion of one dental for another at the end of the word, becomes *said*. The Latin *capra*, a goat, was, in the old Irish orthography, written *gabr*, and so, no doubt, pronounced. Here we have one guttural converted into another, and one labial into another; but they are not marked as commutable letters. In modern Gaelic, the letter *b* is marked as a commutable, but is in fact elided; so that, in pronunciation, the word which is pronounced *goär* becomes but the mere shadow of the original Latin one. In Welsh, the Latin *capra* becomes *gafr*, and in Breton, *gawr*, the last expressing very nearly the Gaelic pronunciation.

The improved orthographic system adopted for the Breton or Armorican affords further corroboration. The convertible letters are the same as in the Welsh and Gaelic, and in French are called *lettres mobiles*, or movable letters. These are represented by characters which express their actual sounds, while grammatical rules are given for their commutation in composition. Hence the Armorican alphabet,

instead of consisting, like the Gaelic and Welsh alphabets, of twelve consonants, has no fewer than twenty. In this system *k* is substituted for the ambiguous *c*: *q*, which does not exist at all in the Welsh and Gaelic, is added; but *h* is not included in the number; for in the Breton it is not sounded, but preserved only for etymology; while *w*, which is called a vowel, is really a consonant, having the sound of the same letter in English.

The object of the commutation in the Armorican orthography is clearly described in the Grammar prefixed to the celebrated Dictionary of Le Gonedec, which is of the same authority for the Breton as that of the Academy for French. 'Usually,' says the author, 'the letters are changed from strong to weak, for softening the pronunciation. Sometimes, however, the change is from weak to strong, for the purpose of distinguishing two words of the same sound, but of different meanings from each other.'

It must not be forgotten that ample time for great changes has elapsed since the Irish and Welsh languages were first committed to writing. The time at which this took place—probably the fourth century—preceded that in which the languages derived from Latin were first committed to writing in the countries of Southern Europe, for the Latin long lingered as the written one.

It is, finally, to be observed on this subject of mutation, that the commutable consonants are not identical. In the Gaelic they are *b* (always hard); *d* (dental); *f*, *g* (hard); *m*, *p*, *s*, and *t* (dental). The Welsh wants the *f* and *s*, and adds its peculiar double *ll*.

I come next to the evidence of grammatical structure, as a test of the affinity of languages, so much relied upon of late by learned Germans. It is by this test chiefly that they come to the very startling conclusion, that the leading languages of ancient and modern Europe have all sprung out

of a dead language of India; or yet more extravagantly, from a language of the highest tableland of Central Asia, of which the very name and locality are pure myths. The corollary follows that all the races speaking them—black, brown, and fair, the Celts included—are of eastern origin. I have on former occasions expressed my disbelief in the validity of this test, and will take this opportunity of briefly recapitulating a few of the arguments which have led to my dissent from so wild an hypothesis.

All the languages of America—and those who have endeavoured to reckon their number have estimated them at above 1,200—have a common grammatical structure—one which distinguishes them from all the other languages of the world. This, adopting the German test of affinity, ought to prove that all the American languages had one common origin; but the theory is at once demolished by the crushing fact that, with the exception of the languages of a few neighbouring tribes and nations which have borrowed a small number of words from each other—the vocabularies of the numerous languages in question are wholly different. An agreement in grammatical structure is, therefore, in this case no evidence of affinity of language, nor does it even go to prove affinity of race. With one material exception, all the inhabitants of America—continental and insular—are usually admitted to be of the same race of man. But the Esquimaux—a wholly distinct race from all the other people of America—speak a language of the same peculiar grammatical structure as the languages of the Red Man, the same disagreement in its words existing as in the latter.

From the eastern borders of Bengal to the utmost eastern limits of China, the numerous languages spoken are, without an exception, monosyllabic, or their words consist of single syllables, which necessarily admit neither of inflection nor composition. They are, therefore, unavoidably of the same

grammatical structure. But the words of these languages are wholly different, even when the race of man is the same; and of the races of man there are at least two clearly distinct ones, the Chinese being an example of one, and the Burmese and Siamese of the other.

The many languages of the Malayan Archipelago, excepting those spoken by the negro race, have a common grammatical character. Their phonetic character is alike, and their structure has the same fashion; but the great body of their words is entirely different; and when they happen to be common to any of them, we know to what sources to trace their origin, and this almost as surely as we can the Norman-French in our own language. In spite, then, of a common agreement in structure, and even of a more or less admixture of words—a result inevitable in a region in which, from its physical geography, intertribal communication must immemorially have been frequent—the languages of the Malay Archipelago must be considered as separate and distinct tongues, and, indeed, it may be added that there hardly exists in this region such a thing as a mere dialect.

A similar conclusion is arrived at from an examination of the languages of the neighbouring Philippine Archipelago. These, with the exception of the Negrito languages, agree in phonetic character and grammatical structure, and both are quite peculiar. Here, too, there is a considerable intermingling of each other's words from the same cause as in the Malayan Archipelago, yet leaving the great body of the words of each language peculiarly its own. There is also some admixture of Malayan words, but we know them, by their mutilated form, to be strangers, and can trace them to their foreign sources.

If we go to the islands of the Pacific Ocean we there find an example of one wide-spread language, in which phonetic

character, grammatical structure, and vocabulary all agree, and where the differences are merely dialectic, while the race of man is one and the same. An accordance in grammatical structure alone would here not be sufficient to prove an affinity of language, still less of race; but the first of these, at all events, is attested by an agreement almost identical in words. The language referred to has no general name, each group of islands having one peculiar to itself. From its wide expansion, however, European writers have named it the Great Polynesian. Within the Northern Pacific, with the single exception of the Sandwich group, this language is unknown, and a variety of tongues prevail, the only link which connects them consisting in a small admixture of Malayan words found also in all the dialects of the Great Polynesian. Yet here the race of man seems throughout to be one and the same with that which speaks the Great Polynesian, the various Negro races of the Southern Pacific being wholly absent in the Northern.

The facts now stated must, I think, be admitted as proof sufficient that the boasted test of an agreement in the mere structural form of languages is inadmissible as evidence of affinity. By it, notwithstanding, I proceed to compare the Gaelic and Welsh languages. These two tongues have each one article only, the definite, but the terms which express it are wholly different. The nouns of the two languages agree in being all masculine or feminine, and by the absence of a neuter gender. The plural number of the noun is formed in an entirely different manner in the two languages. The Gaelic noun has three cases formed by inflections of the nominative, namely, a genitive, a dative, and a vocative. The Welsh has no cases formed by inflection, or other change in the nominative, and relies on prepositions to express relation. The prepositions which express relation in the three languages are entirely different words. The Gaelic adjective

undergoes changes in gender, number and case to agree with the noun, but the Welsh adjective does so only as to gender and number. The manner of forming the degrees of comparison in the two languages differs wholly. The pronouns of the two languages are expressed by words wholly different.

The verb in the two languages differs essentially in formation, as the following examples will suffice to show. The Gaelic verb has four moods, an indicative, a conditional, an imperative, and an infinitive. Its indicative has five tenses, a present, a consuetudinal, a present perfect, a consuetudinal perfect, and a future. The Welsh verb seems, on the whole, to be more perfect than the Gaelic: it has but three moods, an indicative, an imperative, and an infinitive, but its indicative has no fewer than six tenses, a present, a preterite, a preterimperfect, a pluperfect, and a first and second future. It wants the consuetudinal tense of the Gaelic, which signifies that the action is in the custom or habit of being performed.

The substantive verb and the auxiliaries of the two tongues are represented by terms entirely different. The manner of forming verbal nouns in the two languages is also different.

It has been stated that the formation of compound words by the help of prepositions and postpositions is a distinguishing characteristic of all the languages called Indo-Germanic, or Aryan, and among these as a derivative of the Sanscrit have been reckoned the Gaelic and Welsh. No such manner of compounding words is known to either of these languages, and, therefore, in so far as this character is concerned, they are not of the pretended class in question.

I come, finally, to the glossarial test, which, in a comparison of languages, must ever be the most complete and satisfactory. I have compared, with all the care I could command, the Irish dictionary of O'Reilly, with the Welsh

of Spurrel. The first contains better than 50,000 words, and the last above 33,000; and in this multitude, I could discover not more than 200 which were common to the two languages. In nearly every case of these there was a difference in the form of the words in the two languages, and this independent of the factitious difference arising from disagreement in their orthographic systems. Occasionally, indeed, there is a variety, even in the meaning attached to the same word in the two tongues. A more important fact is, that the word common to them seldom stands alone, being in fact but one out of one or more synonyms.

I cannot pretend that all the words common to the Gaelic and Welsh are included in the number I have stated, for no doubt some have escaped my research. All I wish to assert is, that the number is comparatively small, and is far from furnishing evidence of the two languages being sister tongues, of a common parentage.

Taking the Welsh vocabulary for an example, the Gaelic words in it will not exceed one word in 166. The English language, it is needless to insist, contains an incomparably larger proportion of Latin words directly or indirectly introduced; the French, Italian, and Spanish languages a much greater proportion of Teutonic words; even the Spanish, at least as many Arabic words. But we know, historically, the real origin of all these languages—know the English to be of Germanic origin, the languages of the South of Europe to be derived from the Latin, while the other elements of all of them are extrinsic.

The Malay and Javanese languages—and I refer to these as having been the special objects of my own attention—contain, the Malay a greater, and the Javanese a far greater number of Sanscrit words than does the Welsh or Gaelic, or the Gaelic or Welsh words; and this, too, in a far clearer and more perfect form than do the words common to these two tongues.

With respect to the class of words common to the Gaelic and Welsh, they seem to me to be such as we can readily believe would gain admission into the languages of neighbouring people ; and the probability is that they proceeded from the language of the more advanced and powerful to that of the least advanced and weakest. Such infusions are well known to have taken place among rude nations in other parts of the world where intercourse was far more difficult, and the two British islands cannot be supposed to be an exception. The words common to the two indigenous British tongues are of a very miscellaneous character, but they are never such as are indispensable to the structure of language, while both tongues can be written or spoken without their assistance.

For illustration, I will refer to the names of plants and animals, indigenous or of foreign origin, immemorially acclimated or domesticated. To begin with plants : the name for oats is essentially the same in the two languages, and seemingly native. For barley, the names in the two languages are different, and native in both cases ; but the Welsh for a synonyme has the Anglo-Saxon term. The name for wheat, apparently native, is different in the two tongues. That for rye is from the Anglo-Saxon in Welsh, but from Latin in the Gaelic. The name for the pea in both languages is taken from the Latin : for the bean, it is native in Gaelic, and taken from the Latin in Welsh.

For the oak, the Gaelic has but one name, but the Welsh three, one of which seems the Gaelic one in an abridged and imperfect form. For the ash, the elm, the fir, the alder, and the willow, each of the two languages has its own native name or names. In both languages the names for flax and for hemp are taken from the Latin, without any native synonyme. The heath, the fern, and the moss have different native names in the two tongues. The sole Gaelic name for



peat extends also to the Welsh, which, however, has besides its own native name.

With respect to the domesticated animals, it seems not improbable that several of them were indigenous both in Ireland and Wales, and that they were domesticated by the native inhabitants in times far beyond the reach of history, or credible tradition. This is, indeed, implied by their names. In Gaelic, the cow has a native name, and the Welsh the same word; but the Gaelic alone has a name taken from the Latin. It is singular that in neither language is there a native name for the bull, for in both it is taken from the Latin, although the Welsh adds the Saxon word, with considerable corruption, as a synonyme. The name for the calf is native, and the same in the two languages—a monosyllable of impossible pronunciation to a stranger. The name for the steer is native, and different in the two languages.

The generic name for the horse is native, and the same in the two languages; but the Gaelic has also two synonymes taken from the Latin, although one of them is generally restricted to the mare, which, however, has also its native name. As with the bull, there is no name for the entire horse, unless an epithet, and indeed, the Gaelic has adopted the Saxon word. The absence of a specific name for the bull and entire horse most probably arose from the carelessness of a barbarous people to the improvement of their cattle. The cattle of our remote forefathers were most probably multiplied without selection of sires, as are now the ponies of Shetland and the Hebrides, the wild cattle of the American Llanas, and cattle of every description—the camel included, among nearly all the Eastern nations.

For the hog the same native name prevails in the two languages; while for the boar and pig, the names, although native, are wholly different. The only name for the goat in

Gaelic is taken from the Latin, but the Welsh has besides two native names. The name for the kid is the same in the two tongues. May it not be inferred from these facts, that the goat was indigenous in Wales but not in Ireland, and that the probability is that it was introduced into the last of these countries in its domestic state by the Romish or other missionaries, whose language was Latin, or a derivative from it. The sheep and the ram have distinct native names in the two languages; but for the lamb in both the term is Latin—traceable, I have no doubt, to the well-known Scriptural simile. For the dog, the Gaelic has a native name, and also one supposed to be derived from the Latin. The Welsh has only the last of these. In both languages the half-domesticated rabbit—a foreigner in these islands—takes its name from the Latin, implying, no doubt, its introduction by Roman agency.

All the wild indigenous mammalia will be found to bear different names in Gaelic and Welsh. This applies to the deer, including the doe and fawn, to the roe, the hare, the fox, the wolf, the polecat, the weazel, the stoat, the seal, and the whale.

Among birds, I can discover but one, the goose, which has the same name, a native one, in the two languages, and but one also which takes its name from the Latin; this is the pigeon, which in both tongues is a corruption of the Latin *columba*. It is beyond question that the blue-rock pigeon, the source of all the varieties of the domestic bird, is indigenous in the British islands, and, therefore, must have had a native name superseded by the Latin one. The probability then is, that it was the Roman monks or missionaries who first made the Irish and Britons acquainted with the domestic pigeon. A similar adoption of foreign names for indigenous birds has taken place in the English language itself on a far larger scale, as in the instances of the partridge, the plover, the eagle, and the falcon.

Among fishes, I cannot discover one that has a name common to the two languages, whether they be of the sea or of fresh water. Our choicest fishes, the salmon, the trout, the turbot, the dory, the sole, the mullet, which have Norman-French names in English to the loss of their Saxon ones, have their distinct and separate names in Gaelic and in Welsh. It is remarkable that although the Welsh have a native name for the turbot, the Irish and Scots Gaelic has no other than a corruption of the French word, but the fish is not frequent on the Scots or Irish coasts, and it has been only within the last fifty years that some turbot banks have been discovered on them, evidence of unskilfulness on the part of the Irish and Highland fishermen. With one exception, it is the same with reptiles, the exception being the serpent, the Gaelic name of which appears as a synonyme in the Welsh, which, however, has besides two native names of its own. So it is with crustaceans, and even insects, for all of which the names are different in the two languages.

I may here notice that French, as well as the majority of English writers have adopted the theory of the unity of the two languages which I am now endeavouring to show are distinct tongues. In an elaborate dissertation prefixed to the Breton Dictionary of Le Gonedec, the last edition of which is of as late a date as 1847, the writer makes this attempt, in my opinion, very unsuccessfully. As evidence of what he considers but mere dialects of one language, he produces a number of words which he finds to be substantially the same in the Breton and Welsh on one hand, and in the Irish and Scots Gaelic on the other. In so far as concerns the small number of words which are common to the two languages, the author is, of course, successful, but not confining himself to those, he adduces a number belonging to the Breton and Welsh, but which have no

existence at all in the Gaelic of Ireland or Scotland. He does even worse than this, for he brings forward as evidence of unity the words which the two languages have equally derived from a common source, the Latin ; and among these are to be found the numerals with the names of the days of the week, the Latin origin of both of which is beyond all question.

Among the proofs brought forward in favour of a common origin of the Welsh and Irish languages, are the names of ancient places in France and England in parts of those countries where both tongues have long been superseded by foreign idioms. Such names, however corrupt in form, are still clearly traceable to one or other of the two languages in question. Sometimes the names of such places are composed of words common to the two languages, while in others we find them to consist of Welsh words unknown to the Gaelic, or of Gaelic unknown to the Welsh. It is the same with the modern names of places in Wales and Brittany, and in Ireland and the Highlands of Scotland, in all of which, however, the great majority of the names of places consist of native words. All this would seem only to prove that in the remote and unknown times when the names of ancient places were imposed, there existed, as now, some words common to the two languages.

If the facts and arguments adduced in the course of this paper are admitted, we must come to the conclusion, that the Gaelic of Ireland and Scotland, with the dialect of the Isle of Man, on one hand, are the same language, while the Welsh and Breton, with the now extinct Cornish, are essentially the same on the other, the two classes of languages being essentially separate and distinct languages, a small number of words only being common to them, and these never so essential but that either tongue may be spoken or written without recourse to them.

Granting this to be the case, it will naturally be asked, how it comes that nations speaking the same languages are found on the opposite sides of two straits of the sea, the one the British and the other the Irish Channel, while the two languages contain some words that are common to them? A satisfactory answer to this question would require more archæological knowledge than I can command;—perhaps, indeed, more knowledge than the obscurity of the subject will admit. I shall, therefore, chiefly rely on such internal evidence as the languages themselves furnish.

Britain and Ireland, like all other great islands, must have had their own distinct and peculiar aboriginal inhabitants, before strangers, by conquest or colonisation, settled in them. In modern, and, therefore, authentic times, the Asiatic islands of Java, Sumatra, and Luconia; the Austral islands of Australia, New Guinea, and New Zealand; the American islands of Hayti and Cuba; and the African island of Madagascar, were all found inhabited by a peculiar people, speaking distinct languages. The British islands then, it is to be inferred, could not be without aboriginal inhabitants, unless we suppose them to be an exception to a universal rule. What the languages spoken by those aborigines were is unknown and unknowable, except in so far as we may suppose them to be the same with those still spoken by their descendants, under the modern names of Welsh and Irish.

To begin with Britain. When, through the Roman invasion, its inhabitants first became known to the civilised world, near 2,000 years ago, they were certainly very rude barbarians, but they were not savages; for men in possession of cattle, of iron and brass, and who cultivated corn, could not be called savages. But they seem to have been ignorant of textile fabrics, and were clothed in the skins of wild beasts, while they were wholly unacquainted with letters, an ignorance, however, which they shared with the people of the

neighbouring part of the Continent—indeed, with those of all Europe, the inhabitants of Greece and Italy excepted.

What language or languages were spoken in Britain when it became known to the rest of the world, is not told, for both Greeks and Romans, not sharing the curiosity of modern Europeans on this subject, have given us no information. Our earliest and most authentic information respecting Britain, and that portion of the Continent which had intercourse with it, is derived from the Commentaries of Cæsar. Gaul was in Cæsar's time divided among three different people, exclusive of those of Roman Province, and these speaking three different languages. Of the three nations, two only—the Celts and the Belgians—have any reference to the present question. The Celts, the most numerous, and occupying the most extensive territory, reached from the Garonne to the Seine ; while the Belgii occupied the space from the latter river to the Rhine, including part of modern France, and all Belgium. Cæsar tells us that Belgian colonies occupied a considerable portion of the west of Britain in his time, the colonists preserving even the names of the cantons of their mother country. There can be little doubt but that the Celts must have done the same ; and Tacitus tells us, that the Britons directly opposite to Gaul had the same manners and superstitions with the Gauls—that is, with the Celts—and differed but little from them in language. If such were really the case, the people of the west, in the time of Cæsar, and of Tacitus (not very remote from it) spoke two languages, the Belgian and the Celtic. Now, if we suppose the Celtic to be the same with the language of which a remnant has been preserved to us, through the inaccessibility to conquest of the mountainous Brittany, it would follow that the language of a considerable portion of the inhabitants of the Britain of Cæsar and Tacitus spoke Breton or Welsh. According to this view, Britain received colonies from Gaul, and not Gaul from Britain.

But it received also Belgian colonies ; and if, as is generally believed, the Belgians were a Teutonic people, a German tongue must also have been introduced. What language was spoken by the wild people of the interior of Britain, by men represented as clothed in skins, and living on flesh and milk—a people nearly in the hunter state—is of course unknown. But it is certain that both the Belgians and Celts must have been a more civilised and, therefore, a more powerful people than the natives of the interior : for this is to be inferred from the very act of their seizing land and forming settlements. The Belgians—the most warlike of the people of Gaul—seem not to have been the only Teutonic people settled in Britain ; for Tacitus, judging by their physical form, is disposed to think that the Caledonians were so. The invasion of Britain by Scandinavian tribes and their settlement in Britain which was of such frequent occurrence for many centuries after the time of Cæsar and Tacitus, it is not unreasonable to believe must have often taken place for many centuries before it ; and if this were the case, Britain would have been occupied, besides its own aboriginal inhabitants, with two foreign races, the one speaking a Germanic and the other a Celtic tongue. All ancient migrations, it may be added, appear to have been directed on Britain, and none to have proceeded from a country now distinguished beyond all others for emigration.

With regard to Ireland, one race speaking one language, the Gaelic, seems to have pervaded the whole island up to the comparatively recent invasion of Norman-French and Saxons. The fact of the extension of a single language over so wide a country would seem to prove that the people of Ireland 2,000 years ago were in a more advanced state of society than those of Britain. This fact is the same as that which we infer that the people of Madagascar, as we really find them to be, are

more advanced in civilisation than the tribes of the opposite coast of the continent of Africa. As in Britain, Northmen made in Ireland repeated incursions on its coasts, but no permanent settlement or conquest as there. The Romans, so long in occupation of the greater part of Britain, never attempted the conquest of Ireland, an enterprise, from the remoteness of the island, too difficult to undertake. Irish antiquarians speak confidently of Spanish colonists, but certainly there is no satisfactory record of them whether as to race or language; and it must not be forgotten that the ancient inhabitants of Spain were by no means an enterprising people, and that, if they undertook expeditions to Ireland, it is what they never did to any other country.

Ireland, in possession of a more extensive territory and a more fertile soil than the adjacent parts of Britain, it is reasonable to believe would attain an earlier civilisation than these,—consequently, possess more power, and engage sooner in foreign enterprises and conquests. It was probably, therefore, the source of the extension of the Gaelic language to neighbouring countries, or, in other words, the original country of the Gaelic language. As far as history reaches, however, the same language was found to prevail over the mountainous part of Scotland, including the Hebrides, and extending south as far as the Friths of Clyde and Forth. Dates have even been assigned to the times in which the emigrations took place, as, for example, one of A.D. 258, and another of 503, handed down, of course, on Roman authority, for they could not have been derived from a rude people who knew neither epoch nor chronology. These dates, however, probably refer only to particular expeditions from Ireland for the purpose of making conquests in Scotland over men of the same race and language with the conquerors, and can hardly have reference to the first peopling of an ex-



tensive territory and first introduction of the Gaelic language into Scotland, with the supersession of the language of the aboriginal inhabitants. Ireland and the parts of Scotland in which the Gaelic language was spoken were probably considered as no more than portions of the same country. To a maritime people, and the early Irish were so, to cross the narrow sea which divided themselves from the people speaking the same language in Scotland, would be an enterprise of no greater difficulty than sailing the same distance along their own coast.

The conversion to Christianity of the two peoples speaking the languages the subject of this paper—namely, the Welsh and Irish—forms an epoch in their history, for it was marked by a considerable influx of Latin, the language through the medium of which the conversion was effected. None of the countries of the people in question had been conquered and permanently occupied by the Romans, and the conversion of the inhabitants, therefore, could only have been effected by the missionaries of religion without any aid from the civil power.

I have sought, with the best care I could bestow, for words of Latin origin in the Gaelic dictionaries of Ireland and Scotland, and in the Welsh and Breton dictionaries, and have found not fewer than 250, and no doubt a more skilful search would add considerably to this number. These words, as always happens in such cases, are more or less corrupted to suit the genius of the languages adopting them; but they are not so disguised as to be seriously difficult of detection.

The character of the words introduced will show, to some extent, the effect which the new religion must have produced on the social condition of the barbarous and heathen people converted. Nearly all the words connected with religion are, as might be expected, of Latin origin, as God, devil, angel, heaven, hell, soul, body, belief, creator, creature, sin, benediction, prayer, sermon, priest, clerk, clergy, bishop,

church, religion, the cross, Bible, Sabbath, Christmas, baptism, marriage.

Of words implying the communication of useful knowledge, the whole series of numerals from an unit to a thousand, the names of the days of the week, the terms for month and hour, the names of the metals, that is of iron, copper, silver, gold, and even tin; the names for barley, rye, flax, hemp, oil, mill, money, and to count or reckon, are from the Latin.

All the words bearing on the introduction of letters are of course of Latin origin, such as, to write, to read, pen, paper, teacher, pupil, school. To these may be added words of an abstract nature, which we may well believe that the languages of a very rude people would be deficient in, such as time, nature, glory, honour, labour, cause, people.

The inhabitants of the southern parts of Britain are asserted to have been converted to Christianity during the time of the Roman dominion, and most probably about the beginning of the fourth century, when the Roman Emperors themselves had adopted it as the national religion. The mountaineers of Wales, never subdued, must have been converted by missionaries from the low country. The Irish were not converted until the fifth century, the date assigned to their great apostle, St. Patrick, being as late as A.D. 432. The Caledonians or Scots speaking the same language with the Irish were converted a century later, and then in all likelihood through missionaries from Ireland, for in A.D. 503 a great emigration of Irish took place with a settlement in Scotland. The great apostle of Scotland was St. Columbus, no doubt an Irishman.

The existence of Latin words in any Gaelic writings handed down by tradition, I may take this opportunity of stating, would prove them to be more or less adulterated, if they pretended to an antiquity beyond the era of the intro-

duction of Christianity. Applying this rule to the poems of Ossian, whether those translated or paraphrased by Macpherson, or such as have been handed down by oral tradition without his name, we discover words of Latin origin, which, had they been of the ages of Ossian, whose heroes are always represented as heathens, would not have been the case. We find, for example, such words as shield, sword, arms, gold, and silver of Latin origin; but, above all, the names of the numerals from an unit up to a thousand, a class of words here of a compass not likely to exist in the language of a people so rude as must have been the Irish and Caledonians of the time ascribed to Ossian.

No satisfactory knowledge, I imagine, can, in the present enquiry, be derived from the names given by the people themselves or by strangers. With respect to countries more especially, it happens but rarely that those of large extent inhabited by several nations are found to have a common native name among rude people. With them, every islet has its proper distinct name; but usually, from sheer ignorance of its insularity, the great ones have seldom a specific name, each portion of them being usually called after the nation inhabiting it. For illustration, I may state that, while every islet of the Malayan and Philippine Archipelagos have specific names, the great islands, such as those of Borneo, Sumatra, New Guinea, Luconia, and even Java, have no native ones, their present designations having been given to them by strangers in very modern times.

Applying this principle to the countries inhabited by the people speaking the Gaelic and the Welsh with its cognate Briton, it seems doubtful whether any of the greater regions occupied by them had specific native names, while the many islets on their coasts certainly had those which they still bear. The Romans gave to France, from the Pyrenees to the Rhine, the name of Gallia, and called its inhabitants

Galli—words of unknown origin, but the natives had no common name for so wide a territory. The Roman name of the whole country, according to Caesar, was taken from its principal inhabitants, who called themselves, however, Celtæ, probably pronounced Keltæ, which was the name which the Greeks more correctly gave to all the inhabitants of ancient France. Of this term, however, there is certainly no vestige in the native languages of Ireland, Wales, or Armorica, although the Britons consider themselves, and in all likelihood justly so, the descendants of the people whose native name was Keltæ.

The term Bretagne in French, and Brittany in English, applied to the country which the Romans called Armorica, from two words common to the Gaelic and Welsh languages. Ard, a height, or high land, and either muir, the sea, or more probably mor, great or extensive, is unknown under that designation by its present inhabitants, who name their country Breir. The name of Brittany is said to have been given to it when in the fifth century it received a large access of inhabitants from Britain, but this was, most probably, bestowed by strangers.

Of the etymology of the word Britannia, employed by the Romans, there is certainly no certain knowledge. Some have derived it from the Prydain of the Welsh, or the Bhreatunn of the Irish; but I think it far more likely that both these words are corruptions of the Latin word Britannia. It is not, indeed, at all probable that a country of such extent, and inhabited by so many rude and hostile tribes, and differing even in race, should have a common name. I may repeat, that the names of all great countries have been bestowed by strangers more civilised than their own inhabitants. Of this the names of Italy, Spain, Germany, are examples in Europe; and India and China in Asia, to say nothing of the great geographical divisions, Europe, Asia,

Africa, America, and Australia. Of the abstraction which leads to the formation of such terms, barbarians—and our forefathers were sheer barbarians, although not savages—have no conception.

The etymology of the word Wales, which the French write Galles, is unknown unless it be a corruption of the Roman word Gallia. At present the Welsh call themselves Kymri and their country Kymra, words of unascertained origin, and admitted to be of comparatively modern adoption. North and South Wales are known by two different names.

Ireland is the only great country which has a native name, the well-known one, Erin. From this is believed to be taken the Latin name Hibernia, which the Bretons, or Armoricans, have converted into Iverdun. The word Erin is equally the name for Ireland with the Scots Highlanders as with its own natives; but they never apply the adjective for Irish derived from it to themselves, whom they distinguish by the name of Gaelach, using as a correlative the term Galda, pronounced Galla, for the inhabitants of the low country of Scotland, with Eirannach for a native of Ireland, without generally having any conception that they are themselves the very same people with the Irish, in so far, at least, as a common language makes them so.

If the facts and arguments adduced in the course of this paper are valid, the languages which are its subject are two distinct and separate tongues. Bede, indeed, seven centuries ago, pronounced the Welsh and Irish to be as different from each other as Latin and Saxon. So far, then, as language can be considered a test of race, and to the extent that one European race of man differs from another, the parties speaking the two languages must be viewed as distinct original races. The difference between the two people in intellectual endowment may not be appreciable, any more than it is in other European races; but, physically, I think

it is admitted that the Welsh are shorter in stature and darker in complexion than the people, at least of the western part of Ireland, where there has been the least admixture of foreign blood.

But between the two languages there exist, as already stated, a few words which are common to them, although none that are indispensable to their structure—none without the use of which either tongue may not, without much inconvenience, be spoken or written. The question is how these words came to be common to them. Some kind of intercourse between two people at no very remote distance from each, must have taken place in times far beyond the reach of history or tradition; and in the course of such intercommunication, words of one of their languages would certainly be infused into that of the other. I venture to suggest that Ireland, a country more fertile and extensive, and, therefore, more likely to give birth to early civilisation than Wales, was the source from which the common words proceeded. In one quarter of the country, a part of South Wales, indeed, the Irish went much further than communicating a few words of their language, for they conquered and occupied it, imposing on the inhabitants their own tongue just as the Anglo-Saxons in the low and fertile parts of the island imposed theirs.

The communication of a few words of one neighbouring tongue to another—usually of the language of a more to that of a less advanced people—is, indeed, no more than what has often occurred in other parts of the world; and I will adduce, in illustration, a few examples drawn from my own special studies. Into all the principal languages of the Philippine Islands there have been introduced at least double the number of words of the principal languages of the Malayan Archipelago that I suppose there are of Irish words in the Welsh or Armorican, and this although there be as wide a difference in the pronunciation and structure of the

two classes of languages as there is between those of English and French or those of German and Italian. In these cases the infused words are altered or corrupted to suit them to the genus of the languages adopting them; and a similar change, I am satisfied, is made in the Irish words adopted by the Welsh language.

In all the chief languages of the Malayan Archipelago there are found an incomparably greater number of Sanscrit words than there are of Irish words in Welsh, and yet there is nothing in common between the Sanscrit and those languages, whether as to pronunciation or structure. Here, too, the infused words undergo an alteration in form, but because introduced not orally, but through writing, far less than in the Irish words found in Welsh. So it is with the five languages of Southern India spoken by some thirty millions of people. They differ wholly in their structure from the Sanscrit, but contain a great many words of that language, always more or less altered to adapt them to the genus of the tongues adopting them.

If the Gaelic language on one side and the Welsh and Armorian on the other be two distinct tongues, and not, as the denomination of Celtic would give us to understand, dialects of a common tongue, it will of course follow that the people speaking the Gaelic language, whether of Ireland or of Scotland, had no share in the great enterprises of the people known to the Romans as Gauls. The people who established themselves in Northern Italy, who captured Rome, overran and plundered Greece, and, under the name of Galatians, established themselves in Asia Minor, were the Celts—men who spoke the same language which is now spoken in Wales and Brittany; although it is not likely that the inhabitants of these poor and remote countries had any share in such remote enterprises.

The Welsh, on the very slender ground of a resemblance in sound between their own name of Cymri, have laid claim to be the descendants of the Cimbri, one of the three formidable tribes who, 100 years before the birth of Christ, invaded the Roman province of Gaul, crossed the Alps, and were defeated by Marius. The Romans could not tell from what country the invaders proceeded, but from their tall stature and blue eyes they concluded they were Germans. Had they been a people of Gaul, the Romans, who had been long in possession of a portion of that country, could hardly have been ignorant of the fact. They were, therefore, not Celts; and, to say nothing of the word Cymri being a modern one, they could not possibly have been Welsh.

LONDON

PRINTED BY SPOTTISWOODE AND CO.

NEW-STREET SQUARE









